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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/512,142	10/22/2004	Toshio Hosooka	121566	8630
25944	7590	07/31/2006	EXAMINER	
OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC P.O. BOX 19928 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320			WOOD, ELIZABETH D	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1755	

DATE MAILED: 07/31/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/512,142

Applicant(s)

HOSOOKA, TOSHIO

Examiner

Elizabeth D. Wood

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 May 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____

Specification

The examiner has not checked the specification to the extent necessary to determine the presence of **all** possible minor errors (grammatical, typographical and idiomatic). Cooperation of the applicant(s) is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant(s) may become aware of in the specification, in the claims and in any future amendment(s) that applicant(s) may file.

Applicant(s) is also requested to complete the status of any copending applications referred to in the specification by their Attorney Docket Number or Application Serial Number, **if any**.

The status of the parent application(s) and/or any other application(s) cross-referenced to this application, **if any**, should be updated in a timely manner.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The amendment to the preamble, presumably to clearly define the relative percentages, has made the claim more confusing. It now reads a "material comprising 10 to 40% by weight of the entire material added to a mixture". This does not make sense.

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Furthermore, the claims no longer recite water and are therefore incomplete. It is not seen how cement can be kneaded and cured without the presence of water.

The amendment to claim 5 still does not represent a positive limitation on the method and is being read as no more than intended use.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

Claims 1-4 and 8-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by JP 07-102571.

The Japanese document employs cement, water and aggregate, wherein the aggregate contains **not less than** 50 wt.% powder of 0.1mm or less. All compositional percentages appear identical with the exception being that the instant claims recite 10 to **less than** 50% by weight of powder of 0.1 mm or less. Although this might appear a direct teaching away, it is clear that the reference clearly envisioned the claimed subject matter and the use thereof for environmental remediation as claimed in the instant application. The translation states on page 2 that it is simply for economic reasons. Accordingly, the reference has disclosed the invention as claimed as a non-preferred embodiment, which still anticipates the instant claims.

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The instantly claimed mixing and curing steps are adequately taught by the reference, as are the addition of fertilizer and/or components necessary for revegetation.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to

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consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 5-7 and 11-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over claims 1-4 and 8-10 as discussed above.

These claims differ from the JP disclosure in the recitation that the material made is formed into "container-like" bodies and buried.

Absent some convincing evidence to the contrary, the examiner considers this to be a matter of design choice for the skilled artisan. For example, if the artisan intended to grow grass in a given area, a layer of the cementitious material would be selected. If, on the other hand, the artisan intended to grow large trees, then a container shape would be ideal. Clearly, such can be considered a result-effective variable to the artisan ordinarily skilled in the area of technology.

The limitations of all claims have been considered and are deemed to be within the purview of the prior art.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed May 16, 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

With respect to the rejection under 35 USC 102 (b) over JP 07-102571, applicant alleges that patentability of the instant invention is provided by the limitation that the instant material is cured for 8 hours or more and less than 48 hours.

The examiner disagrees. "Two days" and "more than 48 hours" are so close as to be considered to share an endpoint. Moreover, this clearly will be a result-effective

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variable designed to maximize efficiency and ease of the process. The skilled artisan will select both the amount of water and the curing time effective to render the kneading process practicable. The translation itself implies curing will become difficult after too much curing.

Regarding the rejection under 35 USC 103(a), applicant's arguments assert that the office action "simply alleges" that forming the material into a container like body would be design choice and that there is no motivation for the modification.

The examiner disagrees. The examiner maintains that the skilled artisan would select whatever shape is appropriate for a given situation, as discussed above, absent some convincing showing of evidence to the contrary. Furthermore, the material of the reference is a solid, which is really the only ability the material the material needs to carry out the function of being a "container".

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

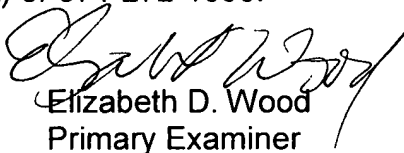
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the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Elizabeth D. Wood whose telephone number is 571-272-1377. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 5:30-2:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jerry Lorengo can be reached on 571-272-1233. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


Elizabeth D. Wood
Primary Examiner
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EDW
7/26/06